

POULTRY NOTES

CHANCE FOR NOVICE
AT WINTER SHOWS

He Should Not Hesitate to Enter Shows, as Competition Is Only Real Test.

By M. K. ROYER.

During the winter shows if you feel that your fowls are of high quality, do not be afraid of defeat; it is only by exhibiting your birds in competition with those of other fanciers that you will be able to learn definitely where they are weak and then study how to improve them. Frequently amateurs who have never exhibited before carry away high honors in some of the largest exhibitions, but generally it is a good rule for the novice to exhibit first at the smaller winter shows. Then when he has had experience in exhibiting he will be able to send his best specimens to the larger shows.

The main thing in showing is to have the fowls in the proper condition when in the showroom. They must be made as gentle as possible so that they may be handled properly and not be frightened while in the cages. Many a good bird has lost a prize for no other reason than that it was wild and excited in the cage and would not pose or stand. For two weeks before the exhibition the birds should be placed in a cage so that they may learn to be quiet and not startled when any one approaches them. The value of this fact is illustrated by Judge J. H. Drevenstedt in the book "Poultry Secrets." Mr. Drevenstedt says a prominent exhibitor at the New York show had imported a fine black Red Game cockerel from England, took it from the steamer direct, and placed it in a cage; another exhibitor had a bird of the same variety in a cage close by. When the judge poked his stick into the cage where the English bird was the latter would try to "fly the coop." In other words, it would not pose nor stand while being examined. The American bred bird, when touched by the judging stick, knew its business and showed its training by posing nicely, and won the prize. Yet the foreign cockerel was intrinsically by far the better bird; it simply was not in proper condition to show its superior points when the judge came around.

Therefore it will be seen that it is

time well spent to tame and train the birds.

Write birds, it is held, are the hardest classes to judge or exhibit, so conditioning is an important factor. If the poultryman keeps his premises clean and the floors of the houses well covered with clean straw there will be little if any necessity for washing the fowls before they are placed on exhibition. A thorough rubbing of the feathers with a soft cloth, to remove any dust that may be on them, the legs carefully oiled and rubbed with sweet oil and a little vaseline rubbed on the comb and wattles will be about all that will be necessary.

Birds reserved for exhibition should now be placed in different quarters and the sexes separated to avoid breaking of feathers. Any broken or off colored feathers can be picked, and if done at once the possibility is that they will grow out properly in time for the show. False or off colored feathers are not necessarily a sign of impurity. In many cases they are caused by a bruise or injury to the feather when growing.

Where good birds show dirt on their plumage washing is the only alternative. For this purpose castile or other white soap and warm water are used. The work must be done in a warm room so the bird may not catch cold, and after it is through with the operation the bird should be placed in a warm room, near a good fire, in a temperature of about 80 or 90 degrees. In a few hours the bird will start to plume itself and be perfectly dry.

In washing the fowl two tubs are filled half full with water just hot enough for the hand to feel comfortable in it. Make lather, and with a sponge rub the plumage thoroughly, rubbing with and not against the feathers. Every part must receive attention, care being taken to remove every particle of dirt.

The bird is then placed in the second tub and the plumage is rinsed with a sponge saturated with water to remove the suds. Too great care cannot be taken in this particular, as soap allowed to remain on the plumage will make the latter blotchy and the feathers will not take the bluing water evenly.

A final rinsing is then given in a tub of clear cold water, to which a little liquid bluing has been added. Too much bluing must not be used, as it will show next to the white in the web of the feet, and the judge is apt to give the award to a more careful exhibitor.

After rinsing the bird thoroughly in this bluing water squeeze the water out of the plumage and dry the feathers with towels. Then place the bird in the coop, which should have the top and sides covered with muslin, the front of the coop and the floor littered with straw. This washing process is followed by attention to the comb, wattles and legs.

The standard of perfection must be used in the selection of the exhibition fowls, and special note must be made of the disqualifying clauses. Much discouragement has been evinced through carelessness on the part of the exhibitor. It requires grit and pluck to be a successful exhibitor. The man who cannot stand up in the face of defeat is not a good sportsman.

CHINESE POULTRYMEN
EXPECT TO VISIT SHOW

They Want to Learn American Methods of Raising Ducks and Chickens.

The presence of a committee of Chinese American poultry raising students at the Madison Square Garden Poultry Show, December 31 to January 5, will be an interesting innovation. The committee is composed of practical merchants, some of whom were farmers in China in the province of Kwangtung. High prices for poultry are driving them to try to compete with American poultry producers, and their idea is to develop a new local industry for industries and speculative Chinese within twenty-five miles, or an easy hauling distance of Manhattan Island.

Superintendent Charles D. Cleveland of the show received a letter of inquiry from Gong Foot Paul, president of the Quian Tai Company, 3 Doyers street, who wrote as chairman of a committee of six appointed by the Chinese Six Companies, asking the best way to acquire quickly Western poultry farming methods, and Mr. Cleveland advised him to attend the show and its educational lectures and demonstrations and to inspect and study the exhibits, live and commercial. Mr. Gong sent a check for six season tickets and the committee will live at the show each day from opening to closing hours so as not to miss anything and to be sure to get its money's worth.

In taking plants or bulbs from a cold pit or cellar into light and heat during winter care should be exercised not to commence forcing too rapidly.

Cold nights, when the weather is severe, window plants should have extra protection. In small windows newspapers spread over the windows will keep the cold from the plants. Heavy wrapping paper makes a good screen for larger windows.

Hyacinths, tulips, narcissi, &c., will be ready now to bring into light and heat. See that the bulbs are well rooted before they are brought out for forcing.

The muscetta vine, so popular about fifteen years ago, is still one of the most satisfactory flowering vines for the window garden.

Red wreaths and light roping of red frize are offered by florists for Christmas decorating. The rope in the smallest size is about half an inch in diameter, made of a cheap imitation of chenille. The roping can be had in three sizes, No. 1, small; No. 2, medium; and No. 3, large. Wreaths can be had 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 inches in diameter. Stars of various sizes are to be had of the same material.

Light graceful roping of ground pine is offered for green decorations. This can be used separately or in combination with the red roping. Different colors of the two strands, one of red and the other of green, winding both strands at the same time, carrying the two strands side by side in winding, gives an unusual effect. A little of this combination can be used to advantage, but the mingling of colors can be easily overcome.

This light red roping can be used for window decorations, stretching it diagonally across the windows; also for draping tablets and pictures and for making various designs on the walls.

Small bunches of white immortelles used with the green and red garlands and designs will break the monotony of the dark green trimmings and heighten the effect.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS.

Christmas decorations in churches and in the home should be light and graceful. Heavy wreaths and banks of green, too large and heavy for the size of the room, give a gloomy and sombre rather than a bright and festive effect. Wild smilax or "cats brier" and ground pine make good garlands. Holly and other evergreens are useful and red immortelles can be wired on to the garlands to add color, affording a very good imitation of red berries. Immortelles can also be had in yellow and white.

In addition to immortelles other everlasting flowers and grasses can be used to advantage in the Christmas decorations. Some of the most useful grasses are briza or shaking grass, agrostis, bromus or bent grass, lacurus ovatus or rabbit tail grass, stipa pennata or feather grass, cynodon or pampas plumes, coix latifolia or Job's tears. Of the everlasting flowers acroclinium, gomphrena, heliopsis and xeranthemum are good. Most of these can be had in various colors.

Provide against any possible danger from fire, keeping the decorations where they cannot possibly take fire from the heat of gas flames or electric lights. Some of the dried grasses, like stipa and pampas plumes, are easily ignited and flame up quickly.

The best effects from holly are obtained by using it by itself and not mixing it with other greens.

Miniature electric light bulbs add

During the leisure of winter is the time to make trellises, hotted sash, mats for hot beds, rustic work, &c.

An average day's work with a two horse walking plough is a little less than 1½ acres, with an average day's work for a three horse sulky plough is between 2 and 2½ acres.

Raffia, used by florists for tying plants, is obtained from the palms, raffia palm and reppia tidiere. The raffia is obtained from the leaves, which are very tough.

Why doesn't some one get up a biographical encyclopedia of agricultural

These two old English maxims are good ones for gardeners to remember: "Good intentions never blossom." "When impatience enters in at the gate, success flies over the fence."

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